

At Page 10, lines 7-8, please replace the current paragraph with the following replacement paragraph:

forward: 5' CCTTTAAGACAGTCAATGC 3' (SEQ ID NO:3); and

reverse: 5' ACTGGTCTATTCATCCTCTC 3' (SEQ ID NO:4)

Claims-

Please add the following new claims 3 through 10 as set forth below:

3 (new). A method for screening pigs to determine those more likely to produce larger litters, and/or those less likely to produce larger litters, wherein the method comprises determining the presence of at least one FSH β -subunit allele(s) in the genome of individual pigs which is associated with pig litter size, and determining the presence of at least one other gene associated with pig litter size.--

--4 (new). The method of claim 3, wherein said method comprises the steps of:

- (i) obtaining a sample of pig nucleic acid;
- (ii) analysing the nucleic acid obtained in (i) to determine the presence of at least one FSH β -subunit allele(s) which is associated with pig litter size; and
- (iii) analysing the nucleic acid obtained in (i) to determine the presence of at least one other gene associated with pig litter size.--

--5 (new). The method of claim 3, wherein the at least one other gene associated with pig litter size is selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the ESR gene; and
- (b) the OPN gene.--

--6 (new). The method of claim 4, wherein the at least one other gene associated with pig litter size is selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) the ESR gene; and
- (b) the OPN gene.--

--7 (new). A kit for screening pigs to identify those more likely to produce larger litters, and/or those less likely to produce large litters, said kit comprising one or more reagents which specifically identify a genetic polymorphism in the region of the gene encoding FSH

β -subunit, wherein an association exists between the genetic polymorphism and pig litter size.--

--8 (new). The kit of claim 7, wherein the reagents specifically identify the retroposon encoded by SEQ ID NO:1.--

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--9 (new). The kit of claim 7, further comprising one or more reagent which specifically identify alleles of at least one other gene linked to litter size in pigs in a sample of pig genomic DNA.--

--10 (new). A method for screening pigs to identify those more likely to produce larger litters, and/or those less likely to produce large litters, which method comprises determining which FSH β -subunit allele(s) is/are present in the genome of individual pigs using the reagents in the kit of claim 9. ~~4~~

Please amend claims 1 and 2 as set forth below. A version with markings to show changes made to the claims is included herewith as Appendix B.

Please amend claim 1 to recite the following:

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~~1~~1 (amended). A method for screening pigs to determine those more likely to produce larger litters, and/or those less likely to produce larger litters, wherein the method comprises determining the presence of at least one marker linked to the FSH β -subunit allele(s) of SEQ ID NO:1 in the genome of individual pigs, and wherein said marker is associated with pig litter size.--

Please amend claim 2 to recite the following:

--2. (amended). The method of claim 1, wherein said method comprises the steps of:

- (i) obtaining a sample of pig nucleic acid; and
- (ii) analysing the nucleic acid obtained in (i) to determine the presence of at least one marker linked to the FSH β -subunit allele(s) of SEQ ID NO:1 in the genome of individual pigs, and wherein said marker is associated with pig litter size. ~~4~~